DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 125 053 EA 008 378

AUTHOR Wiener, William K.; Rudisill, Marie S.
TITLE Collecting Baseline Data for the Least Restrictive Alternative.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 30p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Association of Behavior Analysis (Chicago, Illinois, 1976)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrator Attitudes; *Change Strategies; Educational Innovation; Elementary Secondary Education; *Measurement Techniques; Parent Attitudes; *Program Descriptions; *Regular Class Placement; *School Surveys; Special Education; Tables (Data); Teacher Administrator Relationship; Teacher Attitudes

ABSTRACT

This paper argues that implementing recent federal and state mandates requiring the placement of special students in "the least restrictive educational alternative" necessitates the collection of baseline data on the existing organizational status of affected schools, the current level of teacher preparedness, and community receptivity toward the proposed change. The authors describe in detail five research instruments that are appropriate for gathering such baseline data and discuss the way these instruments were used to prepare for the mainstreaming of exceptional students at Signal Run Elementary School in North Carolina. The instruments used in the Signal Run project included Feitler's Profile of a School--Form T, Blumberg and Amidon's Teacher Perception of Principal Behavior instrument, Schutz's Val-Ed instrument, a Resource Room Questionnaire developed by the authors, and Wiener and Blumberg's Parent-School Community Questionnaire. The appendix summarizes data gathered through the use of these instruments during the Signal Run project. (JG)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED125053

COLLECTING BASELINE DATA FOR THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ALTERNATIVE[1]

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

by

William K. Wiener

Lenoir Rhyne College
Hickory, North Carolina

and

Marie S. Rudisill

Alexander County School District
Taylorsville, North Carolina

[1]Prepared for presentation at the 1976 Convention of the Midwestern Association of Behavior Analysis, Chicago, Illinois.

EA 008 378

Federal (P.L. 94-142) and State mandates to apply the principle of the Least Restrictive Alternative in the placement of children may have an unprecedented impact on the curriculum and instruction of many schools.

Although placing children in the least restrictive educational alternative implies that most children with special needs can be best served in a regular classroom with some resource room assistance, many schools overlook the possibility that such a blanket placement may not be the right answer for some children. The application of a least restrictive alternative policy does not mean wholesale mainstreaming, but the provision of a Cascade or Continuum of Services Model (Deno, 1970) geared to meet the individual needs and objectives of each child.

In addition to considering the child as a placement factor, the school must take into account such variables as the preparedness of the instructional staff, the organizational character of the school and the receptivity of the school's community prior to the implementation of the curricular and instructional changes inherent in the least restrictive alternative. Thus, if a program for handicapped children based upon the principle of the least restrictive alternative is to be successful, baseline data must be collected. A program of planned change may be formulated with objectives geared to the individual character of the school based upon the information.

The process of organizational change is analogous to a behavioral approach to individual change. Where data is collected to determine the operant level of the individual prior to specific objective setting and strategy delineation, the operant level of the school organization must be determined before any change is introduced. As in the case in outlining a plan to modify the behavior of an individual where a number of steps must be taken before a treatment program is put into effect, prerequisite steps must be taken before introducing change into the school.

The following steps seem to be involved:

I. Problem Isolation - This step involves a statement of the area earmarked for change and the general goal of the change program. For example, the problem facing a school might be how to implement the State's placement policies to provide education in the least restrictive situation for all children with special needs; that the best program for the school may be put into operation.

II. Ascertaining the Baseline - The school must collect information to find its operant level: where the organization is at present. Data gathering devices and techniques should be geared to elicit information in the areas of:

   A. Organizational Status - This area concerns teachers' perceptions of their school, its administration and programs. A knowledge of the present organizational status of the school will indicate whether problems exist which must be dealt with prerequisite to any curricular change.

   B. Teacher Preparedness - Information in this area will indicate the basic educational level of the instructional staff, their attitudes toward the proposed

curricular change, and their general attitudes toward education. Data in this area will indicate the kinds of staff development that may be needed to enhance the success of the curricular change.

C. Community Receptivity - Data about the nature of the school's community and their perceptions of the school need to be collected to gauge the amount of parental involvement that may be needed to successfully implement the change .

The objective of baseline data collection should be to gain a precise view concerning the status of the school as it presently exists.

III. Goal Setting - Bearing in mind the problem that has been isolated in Step 1 and given the data about the school that has been collected in Step 2, such a technique as Force Field Analysis (Lewin, 1953) may be used to isolate the factors that hold the school in its present position. Once these factors have been delineated, specific goals may be stated concerning the reduction or strengthening of groups of variables in light of the problem to be solved.

IV. Strategy Formulation and Enactment - Based upon the goals, two or more strategies should be formulated and prioritized for each goal. Following the enactment of a strategy, additional data may be collected to ascertain strategy impact and progress toward a particular goal.

The case of Signal Run Elementary School seems to illustrate the importance of baseline data collection in the planned change process.

Signal Run Elementary School is located in Signal, a small mill town (population - 3,000). The school is one of the Plimpton County's six elementary schools. Students attending Signal Run come from lower-middle class and poverty level rural homes and receive the first eight years of education at the school. The school has twenty-eight teachers (three teachers on each grade level, two kindergarten teachers and two E.M.R. Resource teachers) and approximately eight hundred students.

During the final weeks of the 1973-74 school year, Mr. Petty, Signal Run's principal for the past sixteen (16) years, was requested by the Plimpton County School's District Office to utilize his two self-contained special education teachers as resource teachers during the next academic year.

The move from a self-contained classroom to a resource arrangement at Signal Run was prompted by some pressures from consultants from the State Department of Education to move toward mainstreaming of exceptional children and the realization by District Office personnel that many children who fell into the range of the Educable Mentally Retarded range and below, were not being served.

The Resource Room concept was explained to Mr. Petty by the District Coordinator of Special Programs, and materials were made available to him to

assist in the implementation of the program. Mr. Petty was urged to meet with his special education teachers before the school year ended to allow them to plan with his regular teaching staff, and acquaint them with what would take place when school opened in the Fall. Mr. Petty reasoned that with the resignation of one of his special education teachers and the impending pregnancy leave of the other, it would be better to leave well enough alone until school opened.

With two new special education teachers, Mr. Petty introduced the concept of the resource room approach to his faculty during the week preceding the beginning of the 1974-75 school year. The regular teachers were told that all special education children would be in regular classes and that the resource teachers would be helping them.

Following this brief introduction, the topic of implementing the Resource Room concept was perceived as accomplished by Mr. Petty.

During the first half of the 1974-75 school year, the resource room and the movement toward mainstreaming exceptional children at Signal Run seemed doomed to failure. Regular classroom teachers seemed to be at a loss in dealing with the exceptional children who were now a part of their classrooms. The resource teachers seemed to be bogged down in scheduling and isolated from the rest of the instructional staff; as yet their purpose unclear. Thus, the morale of the resource teachers was low and communication with other teachers had degenerated to a level of enmity. Mr. Petty seemed to feel that the apparent failure of the resource room proved that "special education kids could not learn with regular kids." He disregarded the resource teachers' requests for books and other instructional materials and gave them little assistance in working with the regular classroom teachers.

Realizing some of the problems at Signal Run, the District Office contracted consultant services in an attempt to make mainstreaming at Signal Run successful. Signal Run was the first school in the district to attempt the resource room concept--success or failure could pave the way to acceptance of the least restrictive educational alternative by other schools.

The consultant found Mr. Petty to be an affable person who "...would lend support to anything that could be done to help his school." As an initial step, the consultant spent two days at Signal Run observing and talking with teachers. Teaching seemed to be structured, but adequate for the most part. However, teachers seemed to be making little attempt to integrate the exceptional children into the activities of the regular classroom. In some instances teachers showed frustration not being equipped to deal with the handicapped child. Other teachers felt that the resource teachers gave them little help in prescribing activities for these children. The majority of the teachers felt that the resource room concept was well-founded but the nature of Signal Run made it impossible to implement. They also commented that had Mr. Petty given the staff more time to absorb the resource room concept and plan, the chances for success might have been higher.

Mr. Petty felt that the Resource Room approach was working well and though he encouraged teachers to innovate, all they wanted to do was teach together and give their students independent work so they would have more time to socialize with each other.

There seemed to be a bit of a dichotomy between the teachers' and the principal's perceptions of what was happening at Signal Run, thus the consultant suggested that some baseline data be collected to find out the present status of the school. Mr. Petty subscribed to the idea because he was "always willing to learn something new."

During two faculty meetings, the following instruments were completed by the Signal Run teachers:

1. Profile of a School--Form T (Feitler, 1973)
2. Teacher Perception of Principal Behavior (Blumberg and Amidon, 1965)
3. Val-Ed (Schutz, 1967)
4. Resource Room Questionnaire

In addition, thirty parents from each grade level (N=240) were randomly selected to complete the Parent-School Communications Questionnaire (Wiener and Blumberg, 1973). One hundred and twenty-five parents returned scorable instruments.

Another sample of thirty parents from each grade level was drawn for administration of the Val-Ed. Ninety-eight parents returned the completed instrument.

Mr. Petty was asked to complete a Val-Ed.

The instruments used at Signal Run are designed to provide the following data:

1. An organizational profile of the teachers' perceptions of the school,
2. Information concerning the teachers' perceptions of their principal's behavior,
3. The parents' perceptions of how permeable the school's boundaries are to their input,
4. A profile of the values toward education that are held by the teachers, parents, and the principal,
5. Information concerning teacher background with exceptional children and the reaction of the resource room.

Specifically, The Profile of a School--Form T (Feitler, 1972), is based on an instrument developed by Rensis Likert (1967) for ascertaining information about industrial and school organizations.

The items on Form T fall into five Factors:

Factor I, The Supervisory Processes, contains ten items. Items 1,2,3,4, and 5 are desceiptive of the leadership process while items 8,10,13,26, and 30 yield information about the interpersonal environment of the school derived from the principal's behavior.

The five items in Factor II (14, 21, 23, 25, 29), The Task-Cooperation Processes, reflect the amount and quality of cooperation in the school especially relative to tasks and goals.

The Communication-Decision Making Processes, Factor III, contains six items (6, 7, 16, 19, 20, 24). This process reflects the type of communications and the quality of decision making in the school.

Factor IV contains three items (9, 11, 12) that reflects the support and friendliness present in the school. This is called the Socio-Emotional Processes.

Factor V is composed of the six items (15, 17, 18, 20, 24, 27, 28) making up the Involvement-Motivational Processes. This focuses on the effect of involvement, decision-making and goal setting on the motivation of teachers.

The instrument consists of thirty statements which the respondent rates on a twenty-point scale. Each statement is rated as to how he sees his situation 'now' and how he would like to see it in the 'ideal'. By summing the responses and computing the means for an entire set of statements, an indication of the particular managerial system of a school may be ascertained.

The instrument is structured around the concept that there are four possible systems of organization. System 1, the Exploitive Authoritarian System, is characterized by subservient attitudes of subordinates toward superiors, conflict between organizational levels, and general dissatisfaction with membership in the organization. The communications flow in the System I organization is completely downward from the upper levels of the hierarchy. Interaction between members of the organization is non-existant except within the informal organization. Decisions are generated by a select number of individuals and handed down to subordinates as team decision-making is discouraged. Organizational goals are set by the top level of management and are generally resisted by subordinates. Due to strong control forces, information that teaches the lower echelons of the organization is usually inaccurate and incomplete. It is only at the top level that policies are reviewed.

System I is characterized by low productivity, a high degree of apathy, and an informal organization that uses subversive means to thwart the goals of the organization.

In the Benevolent Authoriative System, System II, attitudes of the organization members vascilate from favorable and supportive behavior in reference to the goals of the organization to open hostility. Generally, subordinates in the organization feel little responsibility for achieving the organization's goals and there is a subservient attitude on the part of the subordinates. As competition for status is high among peers, a great deal of hostility is generated, and there is evidence of condescending attitudes in the superordinates' interactions with his subordinates.

Communications flow in System II is usually downward through the hierarchial levels. Subordinates tend to tell their superior only what they think he wants to hear. Subordinates display some fear in their interactions with their superiors and status competition limits peer interaction. Although there is virtually no group decisions making, and policy making is reserved for the top hierarchial levels, many decisions are made at levels appreciably

higher than levels where the most accurate and adequate information exists.

The goals of System II are made known to the organization through orders issued from the top levels of the hierarchy and although they may be overtly accepted, they are covertly resisted on lower levels. Control of the organization is generally found in the top levels of management, although some delegation of control and review functions are found on lower levels. The informal organization is fairly active, but not as resistant to the organization as in System I.

System II productivity is fairly good, although the general system harbors a great degree of unrest among the organization members.

System III, the Consultative System, completes the triad of Authoritative systems. In this system, organization members are motivated through economic and ego means, where in System I and II, motivations simply stemmed from economic and security needs. Attitudes of members of the organization towards their peers is generally cooperative, although competition may result in hostilities and condescending attitudes toward subordinates. The organization is further characterized by a moderately high degree of satisfaction in regard to supervision, needs satisfaction, and task achievement.

Communications in System III are patterned on the Hierarchial form of Systems I and II, but some communication is initiated on the lower levels and there is a degree of upward communication from subordinates to superiors.

System III interactions are characterized by a fair amount trust and confidence. The goals of the organization may be influenced by subordinates through union type associations.

Broad policies and decisions are generated at the top of the hierarchy with specific decision-making delegated to lower levels of the organization. There is also some team-work and group decision-making in System III. The goals of the organization are set by top level personnel after some consultation with subordinates. Organizational control, while primarily the responsibility of the top level, is shared with lower levels. The informal organization may either resist or support the goals of the formal organization.

This system is characterized by moderately high productivity and fairly high morale which may be equated with task and needs satisfaction.

System IV, the Participative Group, theoretically enables the organization to meet the needs of the members and operate at peak productivity. Morale is high and needs satisfaction and task achievement are at a high level.

System IV is characterized by complete trust and confidence between superiors and subordinates which is seen in the freedom with which a subordinate may discuss his job and the organization with his superior. Attitudes towards both peers and superiors are completely positive and little or no competition between peers is in evidence.

All levels of the organization participate in setting goals, formulating policy and decision-making. Communications patterns are both upward and

downward and are accepted and judged accurate by recipients. Interactions between members of the organization are friendly and complete use is made of the technical skills of the members.

As decision-making is characterized by team work, control of the organizational processes are felt by all members.

In a System IV organization, the informal and formal organizations are one. There is total support of the organization's goals and complete commitment on the part of the membership toward meeting them.

The Teacher Perception of Principal Behavior, (Blumberg and Anidow, 1965) instrument is composed of three items concerning Direct Behavior (a,b, and c) and six items measuring Indirect Behavior (d, e, f, g, h, i). Respondents are asked to rate their principal's behavior for each item on a six point scale ranging from 'very heavy emphasis' to 'no emphasis'. A mean Direct Behavior score is derived from items a, b, and c and a mean Indirect Behavior score from items, d, e, f, g, h, and i.

Direct Behavior is defined as giving directions or commands, giving information or opinions, and giving criticism. Indirect Behavior consists of accepting feelings, encouraging or praising, accepting ideas, and asking questions.

A study by Blumberg and Amidon (1965) indicated that greater productivity in an interaction between teacher and principal and more learning form the interaction took place when the teacher perceived his principal as behaving in a high indirect fashion. Low direct behavior by a principal was related to a more supportive atmosphere during teacher-principal interactions.

Further studies indicate that positive evaluations by teachers of their interpersonal relationship with their principals result when the teachers perceive their principals as placing heavy emphasis on both direct and indirect behavior or when the principal is perceived as demonstrating low direct and high indirect behavior.

Teachers evaluate their interpersonal relations with their principals less positively or negatively when they perceive him indulging in either high direct-low indirect or low direct-low indirect behaviors.

A measurement of educational values has been provided by Schutz (1967) in the Val-Ed. Based upon the FIRO theory, the Val-Ed. elicits data concerning the degree of teacher-child, teacher-community, administrator-teacher, and administrator-community interaction in the areas of inclusion, control, and affection. In addition, the instrument provides a measurement of the importance of the school's attempts to meet the child's abilities and whether the focus of the school is on developing the whole child or simply his mind.

The Val-Ed is a one-hundred-twenty-six item instrument which yields fourteen scores in the following areas:

1. Importance (IMP): The degree to which education has intrinsic value beyond its occupational advantages.

2. Mind (Mind): The degree to which the school should concern itself primarily with developing the mind of the student rather than with developing his whole personality.
3. School-Child: Control (SC:C): The degree to which the school should help the child to realize and use his own abilities and judgement most effectively.
4. Teacher-Child: Control (TC:C): The degree to which the teacher should regulate completely classroom lessons and activities.
5. Teacher-Child: Affection: (TC:A): The degree to which a teacher should be personally friendly and warm toward the children.
6. Teacher-Community: Inclusion (TC:I): The degree to which the teacher should participate in community activities and be encouraged to do so by community members.
7. Teacher-Community: Control (TC:C): The degree to which the teacher should conform to the dominant values of the community.
8. Teacher-Community: Affection (TC:A): The degree to which the teachers and the people in the community should be personally friendly to each other.
9. Administrator-Teacher: Inclusion (AT:I): The degree to which the administrator should take account of teacher's opinions when making policy decisions.
10. Administrator-Teacher: Control (AT:C): The degree to which the administrator should control the activities of the teachers, both in the classroom and in the community.
11. Administrator-Teacher: Affection (AT:A): The degree to which the administrator should be personally close with teachers and express his fellings openly.
12. Administrator-Community: Inclusion (ACm:I): The degree to which the administrator and the people in the community should be involved jointly in school and community affairs.
13. Administrator-Community: Control (ACm:C): The degree to which the desires of the community should determine school policy.
14. Administrator-Community: Affection (ACm:A): The degree to which the administrator and the people in the community should be personally friendly with each other.

Scores range from a low of zero to a high of nine indicating the degree to which the respondent values a particular area.

The revised Parent-School Communications Questionnaire, originally developed by Wiener and Blumberg (1973), was administered to Signal Run parents.

Built upon Katz and Kahn's notion that a social system is surrounded by psychological boundaries insulating it from its environment, the P.S.C.Q. provides a measurement of the degree of permeability or openness the parent perceives at his child's school.

The P.S.C.Q. consists of twenty-five items which respondents are asked to rate on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from "this is always true" to "this is never true". Each item is to be answered on the basis of what the respondents know or feel to be the case at their child's school, whether or not they have had any direct experience with the particular situation.

The P.S.C.Q. provides a measurement of boundary permeability on the following dimensions:

1. Teacher-Parent Interaction- Items on this dimension tap the quality of interaction between parent and teacher as perceived by the respondent. Statements deal with the perceptions of the teachers attitude toward parental contacts, their receptivity of negative feedback, and the interpersonal climate of parent-teacher communications.

2. Parent-Principal Interaction- This dimension contains statements concerning the quality of interaction between parents and the school administrator. Perceptions of how the principal views parent contacts and the parent organization, his receptiveness to negative feedback, and the climate of parent-principal encounters are measured by these items.

3. Accessability- The items included in this dimension concern the parents' perception of the mechanics involved in making contact with the school. Statements deal with the process used by parents to contact school personnel, the tone of school-to-home communications, and the impact the parent perceives he has on his child's teacher.

The Resource Room Questionnaire taps the level of teacher preparedness to accept the resource room concept and exceptional children in their classrooms. The intent of the questionnaire is to find out how the resource room was introduced to the teachers, assess the kinds of services it is providing and elicit the teachers' perceptions about the resource teachers.

An analysis of the data collected at Signal Run seemed to paint a portrait of a school that was not sensitive to either teachers or parents.

The Profile of a School--Form T (Appendix I)* indicated that the teachers perceived Mr. Petty as not having a high degree of trust or confidence in them (1,2). In turn, the teachers showed little support or trust in their principal (3) and did not feel free to discuss their ideas with him (4,5).

The flow of information at Signal Run seems to originate with the principal (6,7) and may be accepted, but with some suspicion, by the teachers (8). Teachers feel that Mr. Petty should have a better grasp on the problems they face (10).

Signal Run, as a place to work, is perceived by the teachers quite favorably (26), perhaps due to the friendly and supportive attitudes displayed by their colleagues (12). Although there seems to be a high degree of interaction and cooperation among teachers (14, 15), there is little interaction between the principal and the teachers (13).

*The numbers in parenthesis refer to instrument and profile item numbers.

Decision-making at Signal Run is usually in the hands of the principal, but teachers are consulted before decisions that affect them are implemented (16, 17, 19, 20). Teachers feel they are not involved enough in the decision-making and goal setting processes (20,24).

Thus, Signal Run's teachers desire more input into their school in addition to more trust and confidence from their principal.

The Teacher Perception of Principal Behavior (Appendix II) indicated that teachers at Signal Run perceived Mr. Petty as behaving in a high direct-low indirect manner. Thus, teachers felt that the principal emphasized giving orders, information, opinions and criticism, rather than accepting the feelings and ideas of his faculty.

The analysis of the Val-Ed (Appendix III) scores of the principal, teachers and parents, seemed to point out some potential problem areas. On the dimension of School-Child:Control (SC:C), Mr. Petty seemed to feel that the school should exert control over the child, rather than assist him to realize and use his own abilities and judgment. Parents' and teachers' scores in this area seemed to indicate that the role of the school was to both develop the individual's abilities and control the child.

Teachers' and parents' scores on the Mind dimension pointed out that they felt that the school should work with the whole child, rather than just his mind. Mr. Petty's scores indicated the opposite.

While Mr. Petty seemed to feel that teachers should limit their interactions with members of the community, he felt that the principal should be personally friendly with people in the community. He also indicated that the community should have a high degree of input into the policies of the school. Teachers and parents felt that a moderate degree of input into the school was sufficient.

The Parent-School Communications Questionnaire results (Appendix IV)* seemed to point out that Mr. Petty's philosophy of community involvment in school policy making and its application were two different things.

Signal Run Elementary School seems to be isolated from parents whose children it serves. Although there seems to be some linkage between the school and the parent-community through the principal (P-P I mean = 2.47, P-P I = #2, 5). The individual parent's attempt to make any impact on the school program or personnel are apparently ineffective (P-P I #6; 4 mean 1.92).

As informal visits to the school appear to be frowned upon (a #1,2,8), it seems best for a parent to contact a teacher through written note rather than by telephone (! #5). When a parent does contact his child's teacher, the teacher does not seem to withhold information from the parent (T-P I #4), but these encounters apparently are perceived by the parent to be cold, impersonal and likely to have little impact (T-P I mean = 1.57; T-P I#2, 3, 6, 8). Parents seem to be quite hesitant about contacting their child's teacher (A #8), perhaps due to the feeling that such contact may have an adverse effect on the child (T-P I #5).

*The numbers in parenthesis refer to instrument and profile item numbers.

School personnel at Signal Run seem to perceive parental contacts as more hindrance that help (T-P I #1; P-P I #4) and place little value upon their input into the school (P-P I #8).

With little personal contact between parent, school principal and staff, other than essential meetings such as parent organization gatherings or conferences (A #6), parents seem to view Signal Run Elementary School as a place where they must send their children and unquestioningly accept its policies and practices.

The Resource Room Questionnaire (Appendix V) indicated that the majority of teachers at Signal Run had some college or inservice courses that dealt with exceptional children, although few had direct experiences in teaching children with special needs (# 2 and 3).

Teachers seemed to be split about whether the resource room was preferable to the self-contained class (#7 and 8) but felt the relationship between regular classroom students and resource room students was for the most part good (#9).

Although most teachers felt that the resource teachers were receptive to them (#11), more advice and assignments for special students were needed (#11) along with work on individualizing for all children in their classes (#10).

The data from all the instruments seemed to point out that Mr. Petty's perception of his school was quite different from the perceptions of his teachers and parents. Thus, it was apparent that each groups perceptions had to be clarified and that a trust relationship had to be established between the principal and his staff before any new program could be introduced.

As the baseline data collected at Signal Run indicated that problems existed between the instructional staff and the principal and between the regular teaching faculty and the resource teachers, it was decided to collect some clarification data through a three-way confrontation between these segments of the school.

The three-way confrontation design (Blumberg and Wiener, 1971) enables the various segments of an organization to clarify their perceptions of each other. Through stating perceptions of themselves, perceptions of the other group or groups, and how they feel the other group perceives them, many problems of an interpersonal nature that may inhibit communication are brought to the surface for discussion. In the case of Signal Run, the regular classroom teachers, the resource teachers and the principal were asked to form three groups and generate a list of adjectives or short phrases that characterized self perceptions, perceptions of the other groups and how they felt the other groups perceived them. Due to the number of regular classroom teachers, their group was subdivided by grade level. Mr. Petty did not choose to participate in this activity.

Following the generation of perceptions, each group posted their list for inspection by the other groups. A question session followed where a member of a group sought information about what in his behavior caused certain

perceptions. During this phase of the activity the emphasis was placed upon behavioral clarification rather than personal characteristics.

The result of the three-way confrontation (Appendix VI) pointed out many misconceptions about the resource room concept and the role of the resource teachers. An explanation of their program by the resource teachers seemed to lay the groundwork for understanding and cooperative planning among the instructional staff at Signal Run.

Based upon the data collected and the results of the three-way confrontation, a Force Field was constructed to facilitate goal setting (Appendix VII). The resultant goals centered around:

1. Bringing about an attitude change in the principal concerning the general goals of the school and the role of teachers,
2. Utilization of the school day to enable teachers to have planning and conference time,
3. Utilization of non-professional school staff to assist teachers in non-instructional duties,
4. Communication and joint planning between the resource teachers and the regular classroom teachers,
5. Staff development work to assist the regular classroom teachers with implementing programs for children with special needs.

To meet these goals, the Signal Run faculty formulated a set of plans which they felt would lead to an effective use of the resource room (Appendix VIII). Staff Development needs were also delineated.

A number of strategies were generated to meet the goal of changing Mr. Petty's attitude. One consisted of presenting for his approval the plans for the resource room for the 1975-76 school year. If the plans were shelved or rejected, teachers agreed to withhold all non-teaching services during the next school year. An alternate strategy consisted of getting support from the District office to force Mr. Petty into acceptance of their plans. Another called for the teachers to run the school as they wished, completely circumventing Mr. Petty.

Prior to the end of the school year, the Signal Run faculty decided to present their plans for the Resource Room to Mr. Petty. The presentation was well received. At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Petty commented that he hoped his successor would allow the staff to implement their program, as he had submitted his resignation.

As a post-script to the Signal Run saga, Mr. Petty's successor was selected with the consent of the faculty. Progress in program implementation at the school has not been without pitfall, but teachers report success in placing their plans into action.

The case of Signal Run seems to illustrate the importance of planning change, rather than transplanting programs with the hope that they may pacify one's superiors. The fact that seems to emerge is that the program must be adapted to fit the school.

Signal Run points out the need for a corollary to the principle of the least restrictive alternative. That is, the curriculum and instructional

plans within any given school should provide not only the least restrictive alternative for the students, but the least restrictive alternative for the instructional staff. Although the goal may be one of mainstreaming of exceptional children, the school may only progress toward that goal within the range of the competency of the personnel of the school. Thus, mandatory mainstreaming with resource room service or any other changes may be inappropriate until the operant level of the school is ascertained and plans are made to reach the goal.

It is only through the systematic planning of change that programs may be successfully implemented. Finding the school organization's present status seems to be essential to gain planning information and gauge progress.

REFERENCES

Blumberg, A. and Amidon, E. "Teacher Perceptions of Supervisor-Teacher Interactions," Administrator's Notebook, 1965, XIV (1).

Blumberg, A. and Wiener, W. "One From Two: Facilitating an Organizational Merger," The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 1971, 7 (1).

Deno, E. "Special Education As Developmental Capital" Exceptional Children, 1970, 37.

Feitler, F.C. "A Study of the Relationships Between Principal Leadership Styles and Organizational Characteristics of Elementary Schools," Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Syracuse University, 1970.

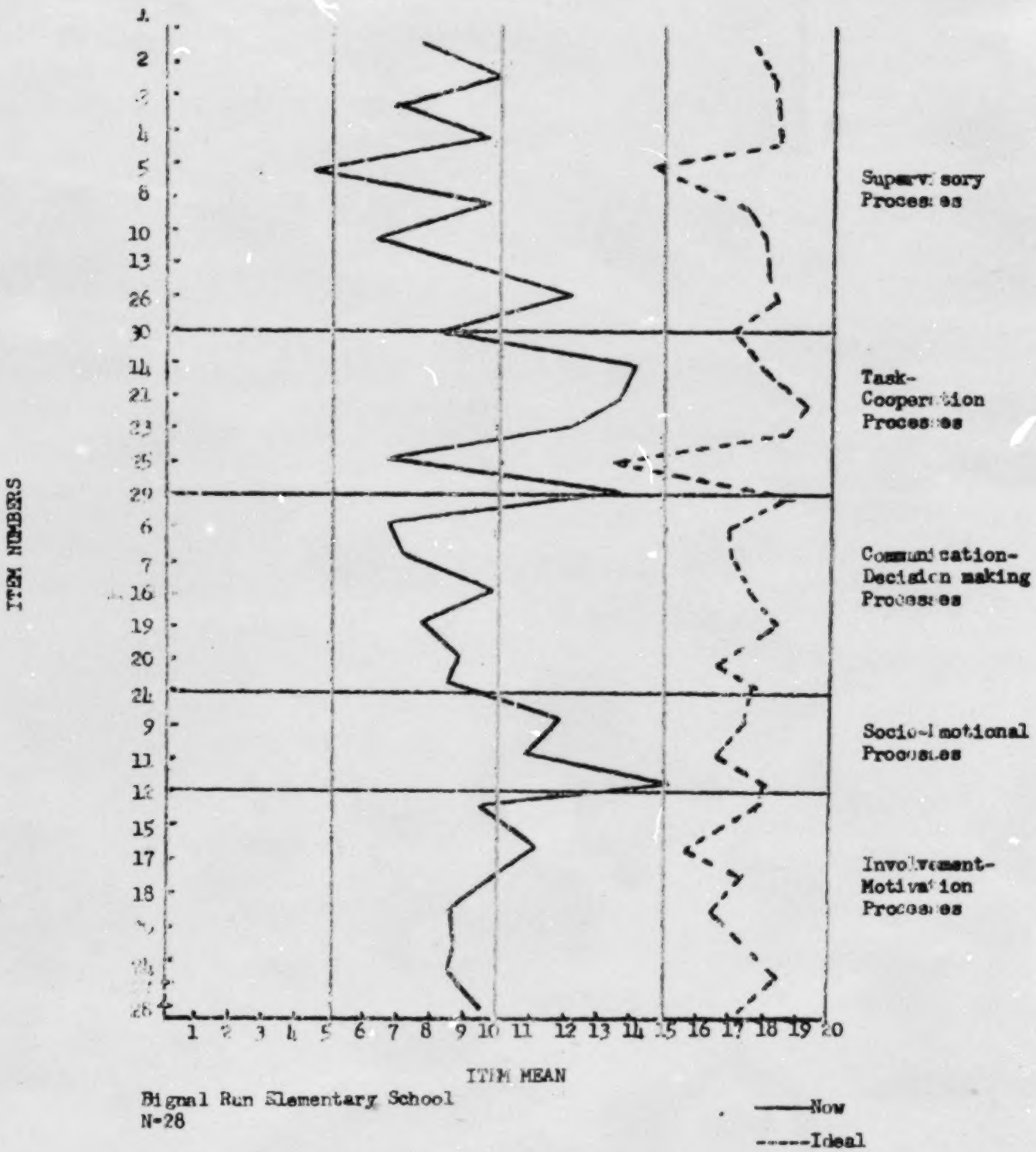
Lewin, K. Field Theory in Social Science. New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1953.

Schutz, W. "The Interpersonal Underworld." Palo Alto: Science and Behavior Books, 1957.

Wiener, W. and Blumberg, A. "The Parent-School Communications Questionnaire: A Measure of School Boundary Permeability." Paper presented at the 1973 A.E.R.A. Convention.

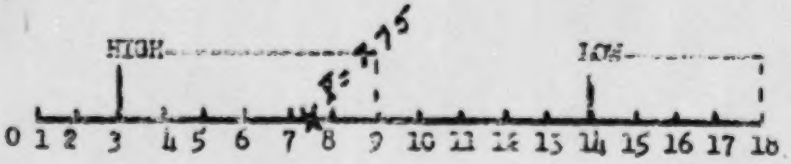
APPENDIX I

PROFILE OF A SCHOOL

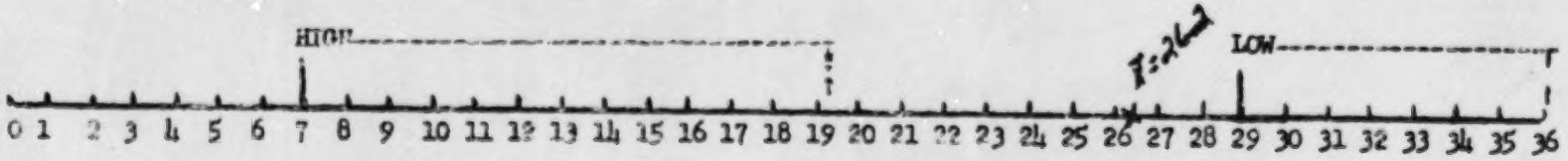


Bignal Run Elementary School
N=28

TEACHER PERCEPTION OF PRINCIPAL BEHAVIOR
(Rating Sheet)



DIRECT BEHAVIOR



INDIRECT BEHAVIOR

Signal Run Elementary School
N=28
mean direct= 7.75
mean indirect= 26.2

Signal Run Elementary Teachers (N=28)

	I	C	A		
TCm	5.5	4.3	5.2	5.0	SC:C
AT	6.0	3.5	4.4	3.6	IMP
ACm	4.6	5.1	5.0	3.1	MIND
TC	---	4.1	5.7	---	

Signal Run Elementary Principal (N=1)

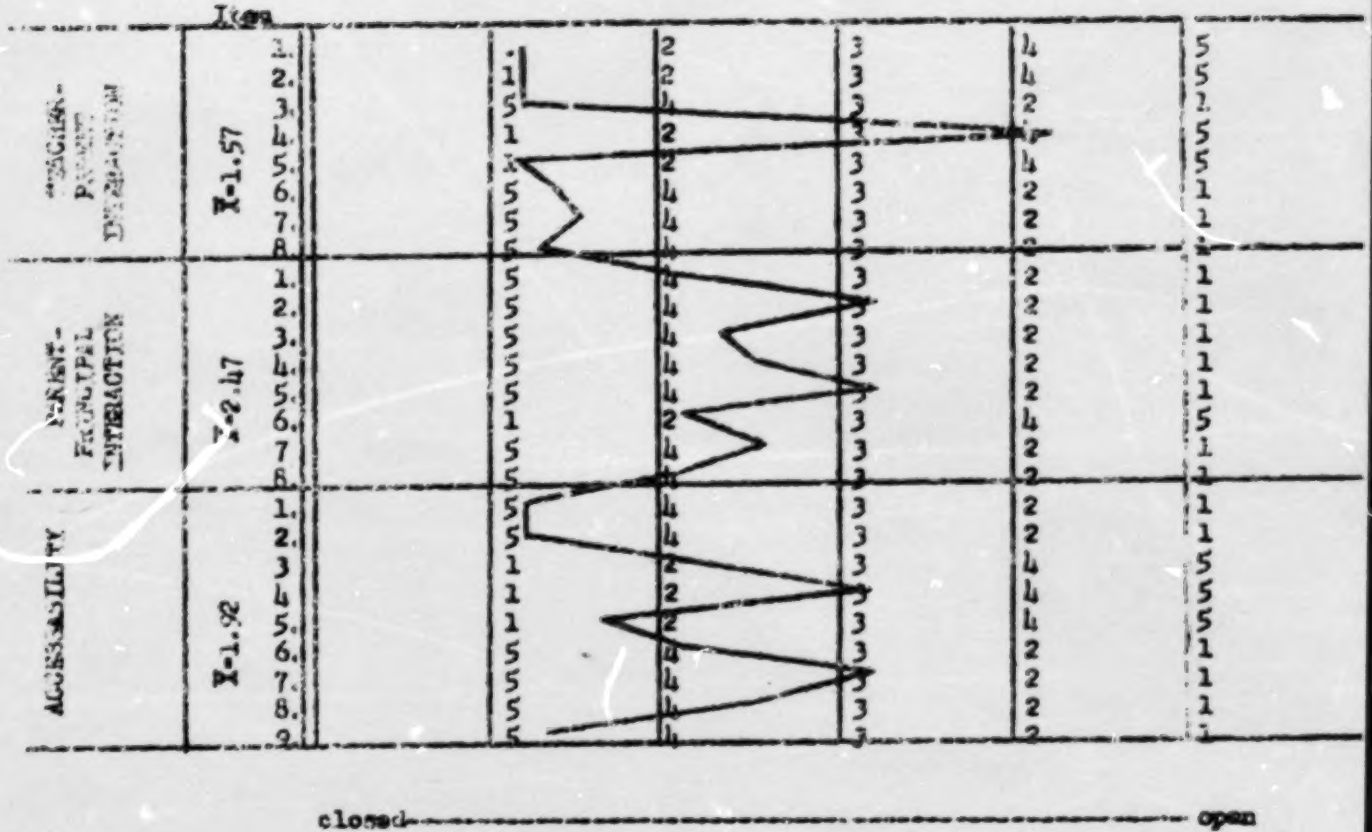
	I	C	A		
TCm	3	6	2	2	SC:C
AT	3	4	4	3	IMP
ACm	3	8	7	7	MIND
TC	-	5	6	-	

Signal Run Elementary Parents (N=98)

	I	C	A		
TCm	6.1	5.9	5.8	4.8	SC:C
AT	5.8	4.1	4.1	3.2	IMP
ACm	6.3	5.2	4.8	4.2	MIND
TC	---	4.6	5.2	---	

Appendix IV

Parent-School Communications Profile



Signal Run Elementary School
N=125

Appendix V

RESOURCE ROOM QUESTIONNAIRE

Please respond to the following questionnaire as honestly as possible. Do Not put your name on this questionnaire.

1. What grade and/or subject do you teach? Signal Run Elementary School- 2/75 Summary data

N=22

2. Have you ever taught a class for exceptional children? 9% yes 91% no

If you have taught a class for exceptional children, what type of class was it?

___ Crippled	___ Hospitalized
2 Educable Mentally Retarded	1 Learning Disabled
___ Emotionally Disturbed	___ Multihandicapped
1 Gifted and Talented	___ Speech and Language Impaired
___ Hearing Impaired	___ Trainable Mentally Retarded
___ Homebound	___ Visually Impaired

N=22 3. Did you ever have a college or in-services course that dealt with exceptional children? 64%yes 36%no

If you have had such a course, what was it?

N=21 4. Do you have any students this year who receive some services from the special education teachers? 62% yes 38% no

If you have such children, how many are in your class? (1) 4 (3) 3 (2) 4 (4) 1

Please complete the following questions by placing an "1" in the space closest to the phrase that best describes your feelings. Please respond to all short answer questions as completely as possible.

N=23 5. I knew that the resource room for special education students would be in operation in my school

before school opened: 52%: 13%: 9% : 26% : on the first day of school

6. How did you find out about the resource room?

N=22 7. I feel that the resource room is:

Better than self contained special Ed. classes:	32%:	14%:	14%:	9%:	31%:	Not as good as self contained special Ed. classes

I feel this way because...

N=21 8. I feel that children in Special Education can receive the best education in a Resource Room: 33% : 19%: 10%: 14%: 24%: In a self-contained class.

I feel this way because:

N=20 9. The relationship between the children in my class and the "special education" children has been

Good: 40% : 15% : 30% : 15% : ___: Bad

Describe how the "special education" children have been accepted (or rejected) by their classmates.

N=18 10. When "special education" students are in my class, I try to individualize instruction to meet their needs

To a great degree: 17% : 17% : 38% : 28% : ____: Not at all

I do this because:

N=20 11. The Resource Teachers

	Give me advice about how to deal with special children:	5%:	40%:	25%:	10%:	20%: Give me no advice about how to deal with special children.
N=17	Give the "special children" assignments to do in my classes:	___:	18%:	23%:	18%:	41%: Do not give the "special children" assignments to do when they are in my class.
N=17	Listen to me	53%:	12%:	23%:	12%:	___: Do not listen to me

12. Please use the space below to give your impressions of the Resource Room organization. How could it be improved? Do you think "special children" should be involved in the regular classroom? What kinds of services do you feel you need to teach the "special child" in your class?

If you have had such a course, what was it?

In-Service: The Exc. Child (2)
Child Psych.
Undergrad. Class
Driver Ed. for handicapped
P.E. for handicapped
Beh. Mod. and Spec. Methods (3)
Exc. Ch. in Elem. Schl.
Psych. of Exec. Ch.

6. How did you find out about the resource room?

Principal (10)
Another teacher
Former Sp. Ed. Teacher (3)
Told by present Sp. Ed. T's (3)
The year before

I feel this way because...

kids love it
kids feel part of group
gives kids help they need
more chance to individualize
better adjustment
kids need to be with peers
they won't be "special" in life
need reg. cl. for social growth
grading unfair
T's must prep. special lessons
Kids frustrated
most kids need more than 2 hrs. help
kids lost in ordinary class
not enough time for teacher to work with them
o.k. for lunch-P.E.-but not academics
easy way out
T's don't know what was taught before so they don't know how to plan
disruptive
Too much time to work with them

I feel this way because...

R.R students are lazier with their work
R.R. students do not feel responsible
They aren't compared to more able students if in Self. Cont.
R.R. necessary for total ed.
materials in the reg. cr. too difficult
They don't feel left out in R.R.
They receive more help in s-c with specially trained teachers
The association with other kids is needed.
Self-Contained gives them security
I have 4-5 groups-Sp. Ed. kids still another level
Best ed. when they don't have to compete with superiors

Describe how the "special education" children have been accepted (or rejected) by their classmates.

Some jealousy from re. students (R.R. students get to go to another class)
They fit in well with others
Small amt. of rejection
Fits in and is accepted
Some jealousy (crafts & parties)
They feel rejected
Little rejection or conflict
Spec. privledges (having class)
rejection due to selfishness or B.O.
Some stigma
Reg. kids resent spec. kids 2 P.E. classes

I do this because...

I try to help all my students (2)
had to conduct '2' classes at one time
don't have as much time to spend with them as I need
too many kids to individualize for
I tell them wk. is good when it isn't
They can't do all the work that other kids do
need more work on their own level
I don't know how to plan for them (Be easier if they stayed in my c.r. all day)

Please use the space below to give your impressions of the Resource Room organization. How could it be improved? Do you think "special children" should be involved in the regular classroom? What kinds of services do you feel you need to teach the "special child" in your class?

kids need longer period for spec. help
kids just pick up impressions in reg. cr.
Be with peers for lunch - art, music, P.E. - only
Too many reg. class kids to have spec. kids too
in self cont. they get spec instr.
Better use of time
We need to be frank and talk about our differences
"our teachers are doing a good job"
more cooperation (and feedback) needed between teachers
currec. needs to be more prepared
T's feel frustrated because they're put upon
Need for aides
Lack of communication
need help to deal with sp. dh.
present program is limited
my rr. kids improving in L.A.

Appendix VI
Three Way Confrontations

REGULAR CLASSROOM TEACHERS

WE PERCEIVE OURSELVES AS:

Openminded
Concerned for students
Cooperative
Intelligent
Honest
Talented
Industrious
Innovative
Comedians (when the time comes)
Professional
Punchy
Absent minded
Spread thin
Hard workers
No time to plan without children
Patient
Need more teaching aids, materials
Sweet and sour
Enthusiastic
Discouraged
Behind
Deprived
Underpriviledged
Suppressed
Kind
Compassionate
Jealous of planning period
Hurried
Coerced
Harried
Dedicated
Argumentative
Outspoken
Smart
Volunteering
Overworked and underpaid

WE PERCEIVE THE RESOURCE TEACHER AS:

Interested
Concerned about each child
Compassionate to students
Artistic - Creative
Innovative
Sometimes cooperative (easy to get along with)
Great helpers
Hard workers
Individualized
Looks like a model
Busy
Agreeable
Industrious
More instruction material
Friendly
Gets along well with children
Standoffish
Having an easy job

THE RESOURCE TEACHERS PERCEIVE US AS:

Cooperative (try to work with them)
Concerned
Overloaded with regular duties
As helpers
As friends
Conscientious
Helpful
Gossipy
Uncooperative
Critical
Not understanding
Hard to get along with
Jealous of them

RESOURCE ROOM TEACHERS

WE PERCEIVE OURSELVES AS:

Conscientious
Concerned about our students
Inexperienced
Enthusiastic
Frustrated
Having inadequate supplies

WE PERCEIVE THE REGULAR TEACHERS AS:

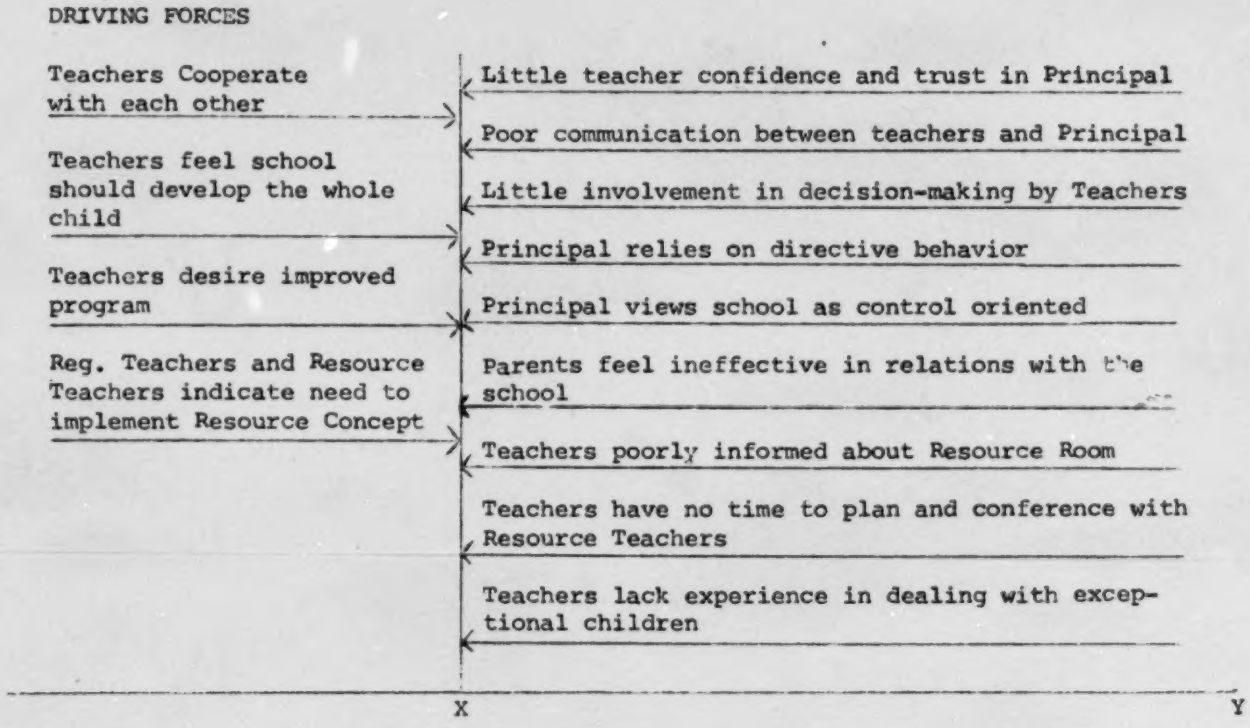
Lack of communication
Lack of training for working with exceptional children
Having too high an expectation of the exceptional children
Having more supplies
Having a general distrust and low opinion of exceptional children
Not having enough confidence in Resource Room teachers

THE REGULAR TEACHERS PERCEIVE US AS:

Having it easy with low class load and not lunch report and registers
Not teaching any academics, but using our time to entertain the students
Unprofessional
Having "all the answers" and immediate results for problems

Appendix VII

Force Field Analysis


DRIVING FORCES
Teachers Cooperate with each other
Teachers feel school should develop the whole child
Teachers desire improved program
Reg. Teachers and Resource Teachers indicate need to implement Resource Concept
Little teacher confidence and trust in Principal
Poor communication between teachers and Principal
Little involvement in decision-making by Teachers
Principal relies on directive behavior
Principal views school as control oriented
Parents feel ineffective in relations with the school
Teachers poorly informed about Resource Room
Teachers have no time to plan and conference with Resource Teachers
Teachers lack experience in dealing with exceptional children
X
Y

X=Present status of Resource Room: Little staff interaction, lack of knowledge of program, administrative blockage

Y=Goal: Operationalization of Resource Room with teacher-Resource Teacher interaction and administrative assistance

Appendix VIII

Plans For 1975-1976 Resource Room

Signal Run Elementary School

A. Prerequisites to Plan Implementation

1. All teachers will receive their grade level assignments for the 1975-76 school year prior to the last day of school (1974-75). RATIONALE: To provide teachers with an opportunity to plan and familiarize themselves with new grade level materials.

2. By the beginning of the 1975-76 school year, a room will be set up on the school premises for the exclusive use of teachers for planning and conferences. It is strongly suggested that bathroom facilities expressly for teachers be set up. RATIONALE: If the resource teachers are effective, conferences must be held with individuals and small groups of teachers to discuss pupil progress and plan activities. These activities should be carried on in a quiet, uninterrupted setting.

3. By the beginning of the 1975-76 school year, all reading text books will be classified by grade level and located in a centralized location on the school premises. RATIONALE: centralization of text books will assist each teacher in securing materials aimed at the particular level of his children.

4. By the beginning of the 1975-76 school year, materials secured from the school custodian (chalk, etc.) will be issued upon teacher demand. RATIONALE: Accessability of teaching materials is important for a smooth program.

5. By the beginning of the 1975-76 school year, the school administrator will formulate a plan for more efficient use of secretarial and custodial services. The following points should be considered in the plan:

a. Assistance with register keeping by the secretary (combining blue sheets)

b. Secretarial assistance with running off duplicated materials.

c. Custodial staff to sweep and keep classrooms clean.

RATIONALE: The teacher should be making use of his time in a professional manner in the execution of his responsibilities toward his students.

6. By the beginning of the 1975-76 school year, the school adminstrator will formulate a policy concerning the expenditure of money for instructional supplies. The following points should be considered in the policy:

a. Duplicator paper and stencils from the general supply allocation, rather from individual teacher allotments.

b. Equipment (file cabinets, etc.) from the general supply allocation, rather then from individual teacher allotments.

c. A supply allotment for the Resources Room, rather than a per capita allocation from regular classroom teachers who have children enrolled in the Resource Room Program.

RATIONALE: Teacher instructional supply allotments should be spent on instructional materials.

7. During the 1975-76 school year, the school administrator should make all announcements, except extreme emergency bulletins, during the first and last fifteen minutes of the school day. RATIONALE: Frequent announcements tend to disrupt classes.

8. During the 1975-76 school year, the school administrator should schedule a bi-weekly faculty meeting. RATIONALE: The staff needs to be convened to discuss common problems and progress.

B. Plans for Resource Room Utilization

During the 1975-76 school year, the resource teachers will instruct their students in the areas of language arts, remedial academics, and social skill development. Students will be grouped by grade level and will each receive one hour of instruction per day in the Resource Room. Thus, the Resource Teachers will spend four hours a day working with groups of children.

During the remainder of the school day, the Resource Teachers will meet with individual students for remedial work for two days a week. They will assist the regular classroom teacher for three days a week with the following:

a. Offering technical assistance in dealing with referred students.
b. Meeting with teachers to discuss the child and his progress.
c. Making instructional recommendations to the teacher.

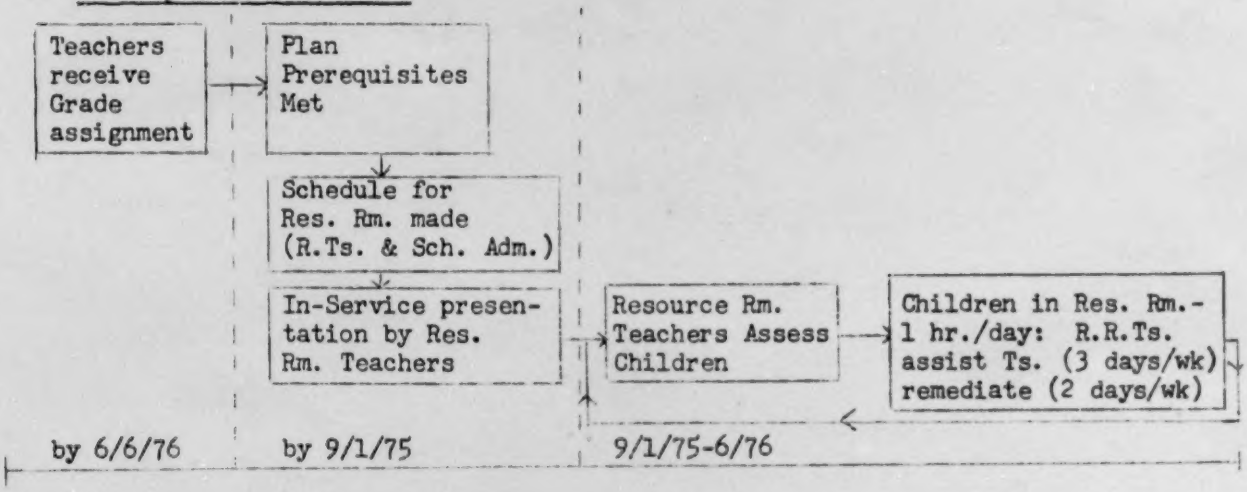
During the first week of school (1975-76), the Resource Teachers will assess each child in their classes and prepare a chart of the child's strengths and weaknesses for the regular classroom teacher. Based upon the child's assessment, the Resource Teachers will work with the child and his teacher to build skills in his areas of weakness.

To enable the Resource Teachers to meet with the regular classroom teachers, the period prior to the opening of the school day (7:45-8:15) and the period from 2:50-3:30 will be reserved for planning and conference. All students entering the school up to 8:15 will report to the auditorium. All students waiting for busses at 2:50 will report to the auditorium. Teachers will share bus duty and before school duty on a weekly rotation. Television may be used in the auditorium for the students' entertainment.

During the first month of school, a committee of teachers and the school administrator will investigate the feasibility of using the 8th grade students in a tutoring or teacher-assistant role for Resource Room and non-Resource Room students.

C. Plan Operationalization (Continued on page 3)

C. Plan Operationalization


Teachers receive Grade assignment
Plan Prerequisites Met
Schedule for Res. Rm. made (R.Ts. & Sch. Adm.)
In-Service presentation by Res. Rm. Teachers
Resource Rm. Teachers Assess Children
Children in Res. Rm.- 1 hr./day: R.R.Ts. assist Ts. (3 days/wk) remediate (2 days/wk)
by 6/6/76
by 9/1/75
9/1/75-6/76